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THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY.

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The Virgin Birth of Christ.

Essay read before a conference by REV. G. ALBERT SCHULZE
and published by request.

II.

The *sedes doctrinae* of the Virgin Birth are not in conflict with any statement contained in the writings of the other two evangelists and the apostles. Fosdick and others of his type make much of the silence that we encounter in the rest of the New Testament with respect to this subject. Fosdick, in his sermon on *The New Knowledge and the Christian Faith*, says: "The two men who contributed most to the Church's thought of the divine meaning of Christ were Paul and John, who never even distantly allude to the Virgin Birth." Even if Fosdick were justified in making the assertion that John and Paul make no reference to the Virgin Birth, what would their silence prove? *E silentio non valet consequentia*. Does the fact that Paul and his colleagues do not say *expressis verbis*, "Christ was born of the Virgin Mary," give us the right to impute to them the intention of saying, "Christ was not born of the Virgin Mary"?

No significance whatsoever attaches to the silence of Mark. He begins his gospel with the public ministry of Christ and so has no occasion to enlarge upon the Lord's birth. But neither does he mention the youth of Jesus. Are we prepared to say that he would have us believe that Jesus had no youth? It is interesting to note that higher critics profess to find Mark ranged upon the side of the witnesses for the Virgin Birth. Orr, in *The Virgin Birth*, p. 106, says: "One curious circumstance in connection with this gospel may be noted in passing. It was the singular contention of the Tuebingen critics — of Baur, Hilgenfeld, and others of the school, also of a scholar like Bleek — that Mark *did* know of the Virgin Birth. . . . It will be remembered that in Matthew's gospel the people of Nazareth are represented as saying, 'Is not this the carpenter's son?' (13, 33.) In Mark this saying appears in the

simpler form, 'Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary?' How, then, these older scholars argued, do you account for Matthew's form, the carpenter's son, getting toned down into this milder utterance, the carpenter, the son of Mary? Can it be from any motive except the desire to avoid the impression that Jesus was really the son of Joseph — a precaution the more necessary that Mark's gospel does not contain an account of the birth? 'Mark,' says Hilgenfeld, 'does not tolerate the paternity of Joseph, even in the mouth of the Nazarenes.' "

St. John, in his gospel, nowhere attacks the teachings of other evangelists on the subject of Christ's birth. On the contrary, he makes numerous statements that cannot but be regarded as corroborative of the doctrine. Hastings in his *Dictionary of Christ and the Apostles*, says: "Silence in the case of John would presumably imply tacit acceptance. Unless the tradition were contradicted either explicitly or tacitly, the presumption in such a case is that it was accepted." I am willing to go a great deal farther than Hastings. Chap. 3, 6 John quotes Jesus as saying: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." Three verses above he had quoted Jesus as saying, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." I am convinced that the evangelist who in the opening chapter of his book has given us those magnificent words concerning the infinite majesty, the divine glory, of Jesus, could not consistently believe that He was flesh born of flesh and therefore by nature excluded from the kingdom of heaven. The very thought would have been rejected by him as blasphemous. His acceptance of the doctrine of the universal need of regeneration compels us to take for granted that he holds that Christ must be separated from sinners by birth. — Chap. 1, 14 he says: 'Ο λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο. He does not say ἦν, but ἐγένετο. Something happens to one already existing. The preexistent λόγος comes into the world. If He already existed, how can He become a man begotten in the ordinary fashion? One can hardly understand what John was driving at if he did not have in mind the idea of the Virgin Birth. — In recent years it has become increasingly popular with theologians to credit John with teaching the Virgin Birth in so many words. "Liberal theologians like Harnack and Loisy, who do not themselves believe the Virgin Birth, argue for the singular in John 1, 13 because they hold that John certainly did believe it. Frederick Blass, the author of the *Grammar of New Testament Greek*, the great Zahn in his *Introduction to the New Testament*, and A. E. Brooke, in *Peake's Commentary on the Bible*, argue for the singular. The last-named

writer says: 'The singular well leads up to v. 14, and the connection with what precedes is good; the sonship of Christians rests on His sonship. In particular the very emphatic threefold negative statement of v. 13 seems to be directed against some who affirmed the contrary, and such a denial was far more likely to be of Christ's supernatural conception than of the divine begetting of Christians in the spiritual sense.' Hort, in his edition of the New Testament, has deemed the variant with the singular important enough to mark it 'Western' in a special note. It is a fact that Irenaeus and Tertullian quote John 1, 13 in the singular reading: Irenaeus in speaking of the Incarnation and Tertullian in arguments against the Valentinians and the Ebionites, who denied the Virgin Birth. Furthermore, Justin Martyr and Augustine apparently knew John 1, 13 in the singular reading. The earliest quotations of this verse give the singular, and this date is a hundred and fifty years earlier than *Codex Vaticanus* and *Codex Sinaiticus*, the two oldest Greek uncials. The old Latin *Codex Veronensis* (b) has '*qui natus est*,' while the Curetonian Syriac has the relative pronoun in the plural, but the verb in the singular." (THEOL. MONTHLY, 5, 373.) That John never even distantly alludes to the Virgin Birth is not so certain; but that he does not deny it is indeed certain.

What is there to the argument based upon the silence of Paul? Nothing. Though it is true that Paul refers very little to the great events in the life of the Savior, with the exception of His crucifixion and resurrection, he occasionally intimates that he knows a great deal more about them than he says. He repeatedly uses words and phrases that would seem to indicate that he was perfectly familiar with what his brethren taught concerning the birth of Jesus. Gal. 4, 4, *e. g.*, he writes: "God sent forth His Son, made of a woman." A rather striking expression. In the original it is still more striking. There we read: *γενόμενον ἐκ γυναικός*, that is, come into being of a woman, from the verb *γίνομαι*, which, according to Thayer's *Greek-English Lexicon*, means to come into existence, begin to be, receive being. In vv. 23. 25. 29 of the same chapter, however, where he speaks of the birth of Ishmael and Isaac, Paul uses the passive of the verb *γεννάω*, the first meaning of which is "beget." Why does the apostle, who is well acquainted with the word "beget," "bear," use a different expression when he speaks of the birth of Christ? We meet the same word Rom. 1, 3; likewise Phil. 2, 7. Why this peculiarity of expression in the case of Paul, who certainly knew the Greek language? Why does he employ the same word that John uses in the passage: *Ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο*?

Furthermore, Paul ascribes sinlessness to Christ; *e. g.*, 2 Cor. 5, 21. He calls Him the Second Adam, who, in direct contrast with the first Adam, who brought sin into the world, saves man unto righteousness. Rom. 5. He calls Him Son of God. Rom. 1. He repeatedly refers to His resurrection. He points to His exaltation to the right hand of God. Phil. 2; Eph. 1. On the other hand, there is hardly a Biblical writer who emphasizes the total corruption of human nature so strongly, cf. Rom. 1—3; who is at such pains to point out the intimate connection of the human race with the first Adam, Rom. 5, 12, 19; who so plainly teaches that man, every man, is by nature a child of wrath and not a son of God, Eph. 2, 3; who so frequently threatens natural man with the wrath and punishment of God, Rom. 1, 18; 6, 23; 8, 6; Eph. 2, 12; etc. Now, if he makes an exception in the case of Christ and asserts the very opposite with respect to Him, we must resort to the use of rather poor logic to convince ourselves that he endeavors to tear down what Matthew and Luke have established. If he placed Jesus upon a level with us, there would be a contradiction between him and the evangelists. But since he ascribes to Jesus glories excelling every thing that may be called admirable in man, it is evident that he cannot but share the view of Christ's miraculous, mysterious entrance into the world. Paul could not speak as he does if he were not certain that Jesus, who is so different from other members of the race, whose life runs an altogether different course, whose exit from the world is so different from the end of ordinary human beings, had a different beginning. In addition, we must not overlook that Paul ascribes to Christ premundane existence. Col. 1, 16, 17. Would he, then, be disposed to deny that this Christ, the Son of God, who has been existing from eternity, became man in a supernatural way?

III.

The old axiom, *Vetus Testamentum in Novo patet, Novum Testamentum in Vetere latet*, has its application also with respect to the doctrine of the Virgin Birth. The prophets clearly foretell the Virgin Birth of the Redeemer. It has been customary for centuries to look upon Gen. 3, 15 as a prophecy of the Virgin Birth. Luther writes: "*Solches ist verkuendigt gewesen von Anbeginn, dass Gott sollte Mensch werden, und dass seine Mutter eine Jungfrau sein sollte, wie die erste Verheissung, welche Gott bald nach Adams Fall gegeben hat, zeigt, 1 Mos. 3, 15: 'Des Weibes Same soll der Schlange den Kopf zertreten.' Er spricht nicht, des Mannes Same soll es tun, sondern des Weibes Same. . . . Darum muss dieses*

Schlangentreters Mutter eine Jungfrau sein. . . . Wenn nun in den letzten Zeiten Schwaermer kommen werden und wider diesen Artikel plaudern, so seht, dass ihr fest steht." (St. L., 13b, 2676.) Though Eve misunderstood the words of God, yet it is as plain as daylight that the first evangelical promise points to the Virgin Birth. The term "Seed of the Woman" cannot be understood in a general sense as signifying posterity. It is certain that זרע can denote an individual. Gen. 4, 25; 22, 18. The context compels us to understand it here as referring to an individual; for in the second half of the verse we read: "He shall bruise thy head." Two persons are spoken of. The Scriptures throughout teach that one of the two can be none other than Christ. The prophecy is obviously Messianic (Eve seems to have understood it in that sense too, Gen. 4, 1). And even if we were not ready to admit that the expression "Seed of the Woman" is equivalent to the term "Son of the Virgin," we must at least concede that a careful reading of the words creates the impression that the promised Redeemer shall have a beginning different from that of ordinary men. Indeed, from the fact that the promise is made that the "Seed of the Woman" shall be victorious in the combat with the serpent, we cannot but conclude that He must be without sin. For if He is polluted with sin, He cannot overcome Satan, being completely in his power. And if He is without sin, He cannot be born according to the ordinary course of nature.

The clearest prophecy of the Virgin Birth is Is. 7, 14. Matthew, writing by inspiration of the Holy Ghost, insists that the words of Isaiah were fulfilled when Jesus was born. Keil: "*Matthaeus denkt unzweifelhaft, dass der Prophet direkt geweissagt hat, der Messias werde von einer Jungfrau geboren werden.*" (Meyer, *Kommentar*.) The question arises: Does the term עַלְמָה, as used by Isaiah, really signify a virgin, a *virgo intacta*? The word occurs in the Scriptures seven times: Gen. 24, 43; Ex. 2, 8; Ps. 68, 26; Cant. 1, 3; 6, 7; Prov. 30, 19; Is. 7, 14. In some of the passages it cannot designate anything but a virgin. Orr (*The Virgin Birth*): "In all the six places in which, besides this passage, the word occurs in the Old Testament, it may be contended that this is its meaning. . . . It is true that the word means a marriageable young woman; but it is not less true that in its use in the Old Testament it means an unmarried young woman." (p. 133.) Stoeckhardt says: "*Die LXX und Matthaeus geben es wieder mit παρθένος, die Vulgata mit virgo, Luther mit Jungfrau. Und das ist die einzig nachweisbare Bedeutung.*" Luther declares: "Nirgends in

der Schrift heisst עַלְמָה ein verrueckt [married] Weib"; and he offers to give a hundred gulden to any one, Christian or Jew, who will prove that in the *usus loquendi* of the Old Testament עַלְמָה ever means as much as a young married woman. Stoeckhardt remarks: "*Die hebraeische Sprachforschung hat seit Luthers Tagen bis zur Gegenwart erhebliche Fortschritte gemacht. Aber Luther koennte auch, wenn er heute lebte, die hundert Gulden fuer sich behalten.*" In this passage the word cannot mean anything but a virgin. Think of the nonsense at which we should arrive if we translated עַלְמָה with young married woman. At the command of God, Isaiah is to give Ahaz a sign. What kind of sign would that be — a young married woman becoming pregnant and giving birth to a son? That happens in Albany every day; and in Judah it, no doubt, happened more frequently still, the population of Judah being larger and the Jewish women being more prolific. It would be rather strange if Isaiah merely wanted to say that a *virgo* was about to have sexual intercourse with a man, whether in or out of wedlock, and bear a son. Luther in his trenchant way remarks: "*Das waere kein gross Zeichen; das ist der gemeinen Natur Lauf.*" (St. L., 20, 1801.) — The Jews, and some who are not Jews, declare that the sign consisted in the birth of a son and not of a daughter. Here Luther remarks: "*Das waere kein Zeichen an der Jungfrau, sondern das Zeichen bestaende darin, dass Jesaias die Geburt eines Sohnes erraten hat; das ist aber schimpflich und kindisch.*" (St. L., 20, 1801.) One has very little inclination to occupy oneself with that kind of exegesis. Is. 7, 14 has very little sense of any kind if it is not to be understood as speaking of a virgin's son. "To say a virgin conceives, if something extraordinary is meant, is to say that a virgin while still a virgin conceives." (F. Pierce Ramsay, *The Virgin Birth*, p. 33.) The whole character of the prophecy connected with this passage leads to the conclusion of a supernatural origin of the promised Child. Take a few minutes of your time and read chapters 7, 8, and 9, and you will not be able to ward off the conviction that the child of whom we read chap. 9, 6. 7 that it shall be called Wonderful, . . . Mighty God, must have a beginning different from that of an ordinary Jewish boy. Cf. also chap. 8, 10.

Micah 5, 2. 3 teaches the same doctrine taught by Isaiah. The prophet says: "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto Me that is to be Ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting. Therefore will He give them up, until

the time that she which travaileth hath brought forth." There can be no doubt that Micah has the Messiah in mind. Matt. 2. And he speaks of the bringing forth by her "which travaileth." Not a word about a father.

The Virgin Birth is probably also taught Jer. 31, 22: "The Lord hath created a new thing in the earth, A woman shall compass a man." Matthew Henry comments: "Many good interpreters understand this 'new thing' created in that land to be the incarnation of Christ, which God had an eye to in bringing them back to that land and which had sometimes been given them for a sign. A woman, the Virgin Mary, encloses in her womb the Mighty One." Daechsel says: "*In der zweiten Haelfte des Satzes hat die Frage die Ausleger viel beschaeftigt, was dies Neue, das der Herr im Lande schaffen will, sei, indem er spricht: 'Das Weib wird den Mann umgeben,' und sind darueber ganze Buecher geschrieben. Luther sagt: 'Ich werfe den Verstand nicht weg, da die Alten sagen, Christus sei der Mann, von Maria umgeben, das ist, empfangen und geboren'; danach haetten wir hier die Erfuellung der Weissagung in Jes. 7, 14.*" Calov, in his *Biblia Illustrata*: "*Viri solent ambire puellas; non puellae viros. . . . Nos oraculum de Christo intelligimus, non sensu tantum mystico, sed proprio et literali, quod nempe femina Maria, virgo beata, circumdatura sit, et utero conclusura, non infantem aut puerum, sed virum, idque sine virili opera, quod vere est mirabile.*" He adduces twelve arguments in favor of his interpretation. (Luther: "*Man kann es nicht von Israel verstehen und erklæaren: Israel ist eine Hure gewesen und wird sich bekehren und ihren Mann, das ist, Gott, wieder umgeben. Das ist nichts Neues. Israel hat oft gehurt und oft sich bekehrt.*")

It is immaterial, however, whether this passage foretells the Virgin Birth or not. We are positive that it was prophesied in the Old Testament. Here again there is perfect harmony between the Old and the New Testament. Were we to consider all the Messianic prophecies, we should no doubt easily convince ourselves that in all of them the doctrine that Jesus was not born naturally, that is, as the result of the cohabitation of man and woman, is involved and thus foretold, at least *implicite*.

IV.

The doctrine of the Virgin Birth of our Lord is very closely bound up with the cardinal teachings of Holy Writ; indeed, we may say that what the Bible teaches about the way of salvation presupposes the supernatural birth of Him who is set forth as the

Savior. As regards non-Christian religions, it is a matter of little moment what kind of persons their originators were. Mohammedanism, *e. g.*, remains absolutely what it is, whatever Mohammed may or may not have been. A Mohammedan may, perhaps, be ready to grant that the author of his religion was an epileptic visionary or a plain "nut" and yet remain a zealous adherent of the Koran. With respect to the Christian religion the case is entirely different. The Christian religion sets its central figure apart from the rest of humanity and places Him upon an infinitely higher plane. Indeed, the Christian religion is built up on the person of Christ.

The doctrine of the redemption is the very heart of our faith. That we need a Redeemer is taught on every page of the Good Book. According to its plain statements, all men are sinners, and sin is described as enmity, rebellion, against God. Rationalism, it is true, regards sin merely as an aberration from the path of virtue, which man is inherently able to atone for by outward reformation of his conduct. The rationalist needs no Redeemer. He is his own redeemer. He covers up the rents in his garment with a few rags, and all is well. Some rationalists do not deem it necessary to do any patching at all, flattering themselves that God and the universe are identical (pantheists). God is all in all; all in all is God; hence there is no sin, and hence no Redeemer is needed.

But the Scriptures teach the fact of sin and the consequent need of redemption. They declare that by nature man is not as God would have him be, but rather an enemy of God, Rom. 2, 23; 8, 7; that all who have come into the world in the course of nature are not God-centered, but self-centered, that man, left to himself, even though he would seek to find God, would constantly stray farther away from Him, Is. 53, 16; that he is dead in trespasses and sins, and that, therefore, there is no point of contact with God which would enable him to enter into communion with Him. The Bible furthermore teaches that sin holds man by a thousand chains. Man is not only at war with God; he is determined to continue in his apostasy. He cannot do otherwise. Even though he may lay aside some of his evil ways, yet in his heart the fire of sin burns without ceasing, and he cannot quench it. Rom. 8, 7. St. Paul complains: "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Rom. 7, 24. In the days of his connection with the Pharisees he had made strenuous efforts to rid himself of sin, but in vain. Luther and thousands of others made similar attempts in the cloister, but in vain. Others have tried other ways,

but in vain. Some eventually realize that the power of sin is so great that they cannot overcome it; the Buddhist, for example, who sees the only possibility of salvation from sin in the Nirvana, the extinction of the soul. Finally the Scriptures teach that sin has evil consequences, not only of a physical, temporal nature, but consequences that are far more terrible and horrible. Sin is an insult to God. God is infinite. And so sin places upon man the burden of infinite guilt. And because he is unable to rid himself of the burden, he is doomed to remain a child of wrath. Eph. 2, 3; Gal. 3, 10. "The wages of sin is death." Rom. 6, 23. Not only temporal death with all its prevenient and concomitant evils, the vast host of sicknesses, diseases, accidents, calamities, but eternal death, the everlasting separation of man and God, and uninterrupted pangs of damnation. — In fine, we are unable to cope with sin, which is essentially alienation from God, rebellion, has complete control over us, and condemns us to death, to hell. Truly, we need a Redeemer.

God, in His Word, presents Christ as the Redeemer of the world. And God, we know, is not a man that He should lie. And if God speaks the truth when He calls Him the Redeemer of our race, then Christ cannot but have had a miraculous birth. Of course, He must be a human being like us. *Τὸ ἀπρόσληπτον ἀνθρώπου* (Gregory Nazianzen). This quaint saying is founded upon the Scriptures. Heb. 2, 16 we read: "He took not on him the nature of angels; but He took on Him the seed of Abraham." Gal. 4, 4 the apostle says that He was made of a woman. Our Redeemer must substitute for us, must be what we should have been, do what we should have done, bear what we should have borne, suffer what we should have suffered, — must completely enter into our humanity. And no one but a human being can do that. Our Substitute must be a true man from the earliest moment of His earthly career. Man had sinned, and atonement for sin can therefore be made only by a man. If the Docetæ were right, Christ could not be our Redeemer. A phantom that slips through the generative organs of a woman would be without value for us in spite of its outward beauty and glory. True, to insure His genuine humanity, a special mode of entering into the world would not have been absolutely necessary. Jesus would have been a human being even if He had been born in the natural way, in wedlock. On the other hand, we must ever maintain that a virgin can bring forth a true man, and that Mary did bring forth a true man, and not merely half a man. There are analogies in nature. Huxley: "Vir-

gin procreation is an ordinary phenomenon for the naturalist." (Orr, *V. B.*, p. 221.) The instances of parthenogenesis observable in nature prove that that which is generated in this manner bears the nature of the mother, even though there is no father connected with the act of generation. — As far as the bringing forth of the humanity of Christ is concerned, we must admit that it does not require a virgin birth.

Our Redeemer, however, must be not only a true man, but also a sinless man; for, as has been said, He must render perfect obedience to the Law. Jesus Himself says that He came to fulfil the Law. Matt. 5, 17. His active obedience to the Law is an essential part of our redemption. Our Redeemer dare not be a transgressor. Moreover, by our failure to fulfil our duties, we have loaded a heavy burden of guilt upon ourselves; what we have done must be undone; the guilt must be removed. And he that would pay our debt must have no debt of his own. Now, God says that Jesus was without sin, that He *is* without sin. Hence, He cannot have been born in the ordinary human way. Were He merely the product of the matrimonial relation, He would be a sinner. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." Enemies of the faith sometimes assert that the Virgin Birth is not essential for the establishment of the sinlessness of Christ. We do not say that the mere fact that Jesus had no human father renders Him sinless. In connection with the Virgin Birth we hold fast to the doctrine of Christ's conception by the Holy Ghost. But if we predicate absolute sinlessness of Christ, we are compelled to predicate His miraculous birth. He cannot be sinless if at His birth the same laws obtained that govern the birth of ordinary mortals. — But could not Christ be our Redeemer if He had come into the world a full-grown man? A foolish question. Who are we that we should presume *a priori* to pass judgment upon matters that lie beyond the horizon of our intellect, matters that only God can determine? A redeemer who entered life a full-fledged man, say of thirty years of age, would seem to be only half a redeemer. How could he satisfy the demands which the Law makes upon us from the days of our conception to the time of our maturity? How could he remove the guilt that we have brought into the world with us and which we have accumulated in the days of our childhood and youth? Dr. Pieper says: "*Christus muss seine Erloeserarbeit frueh beginnen. Es handelte sich um eine stellvertretende Darstellung eines heiligen Menschenlebens vom ersten Anfang an. Deshalb geht der Mittler zwischen Gott und den Menschen auf das allgemein-menschliche Werden ein.*"

Der Kausalnexus der niedrigen Menschwerdung mit der Erloesung der Menschen ist klar bezeugt, wenn die Schrift sagt, dass Gottes Sohn auf dem Wege der Geburt aus einem Weibe und mit Unterstellung unter das Gesetz in die Welt gesandt worden ist in der Absicht (ἵνα), eben auf diese Weise die unter dem Gesetz sich befindenden Menschen loszukaufen. Gal. 4, 4. 5." (Dogm., III, 365.) Pieper quotes Kromayer: "*Christus per omnes aetatis nostrae gradus venit, ut immundam nostram conceptionem et nativitatem radicitus curaret.*" Luther says: "*An diesem Artikel ist es gelegen. Christus hat wollen anheben da, da wir anheben; denn er hat uns durch und durch heiligen wollen. Wir heben in Suenden an.*" (XXIIb, 2676.) Our Lord's sinlessness requires a sinless birth, a birth such as is ascribed to Him by Matthew and Luke. Though it may be impossible to show *a priori* that the sinlessness necessarily implies the Virgin Birth, it certainly does condition a miraculous birth. And God assures us that it has pleased Him to accomplish this wonder by a miracle of this particular form. According to God's revealed plan of our redemption the sinlessness of the Redeemer and His Virgin Birth necessarily go together.

May God preserve us in the faith that Jesus was born of the Virgin! If we lose our faith in this doctrine, we shall have difficulty in retaining our faith in the redemptive work of Him whom we worship as our Savior. About thirty years ago a German preacher named Schrempf announced that he was unable to subscribe to all statements of the Apostolic Creed, particularly to the words: "Born of the Virgin Mary." The Consistory of the Ev. Luth. State Church of Prussia thereupon issued a public declaration in which we find the following words: "*Dass der Sohn Gottes empfangen ist von dem Heiligen Geist, geboren von der Jungfrau, das ist das Fundament des Christentums; das ist der Eckstein, an welchem alle Weisheit dieser Welt zerschellen wird.*" (L. u. W., 38, 316.) It is of the utmost importance that we maintain the *natus ex Maria virgine*. For although this article is not one of the *articuli fundamentales primarii*, without the knowledge of which salvation is impossible, its connection with the Scriptural teaching concerning the person and work of Christ is so intimate that consistent denial inevitably leads to rejection of the *articuli fundamentalissimi*. Impugners of the Virgin Birth are usually arrayed on the side of those who take a negative attitude toward the doctrine of the redemption of the world by the blood of Christ. The Virgin Birth is not an open question, but a vital part of the Christian religion.

(To be concluded.)

THE THEOLOGICAL OBSERVER.

Dr. Delk's Theological Position. — That the U. L. C. tolerates false teachers in high places is evident from the address delivered by Dr. Delk, of Philadelphia, at the installation of three new professors in Gettysburg, Professors Stamm (New Testament), Aberly (Systematic Theology), and Hoover (Practical Theology). This was an occasion for rejoicing for the old historic school at Gettysburg. It is a pity that the occasion was marred by the address of Dr. Delk. We quote some of the characteristic utterances of Dr. Delk: "When I came to the seminary years ago, I fully believed in the verbal inspiration of every book of the Bible. Questions concerning the genuineness and authenticity of the various books had not presented themselves to me. I believed that each book had one particular writer and that he was not dependent upon earlier Scriptures or traditions, but that out of the blue of heaven or from mountain-top God spoke to men, and that, inspired and controlled by an indwelling divine spirit, the books were made free from all error from cover to cover. To think of myth or legend in connection with the Bible seemed destructive and morally reprehensible. A text that seemed usable in supporting a theological tenet could be legitimately taken from any part of the Holy Scriptures. The Bible was to me an infallible authority in its statements concerning astronomy, geology, anthropology, history, ethics, and religion. I do not say that our professors held or taught a verbal dictation theory of inspiration, but I fancy I had plenty of company in my jejune conception and belief that the Bible in all its statements was inerrant. — What a change has been wrought in the sphere of New Testament scholarship during the last fifty years! . . . Lutheran theology did not cease or culminate in the seventeenth century. Dorner, Tholuck, Frank, Luthardt, Martensen, Kaftan, and Hermann are a few of the masters that have added luster to German and Scandinavian theology and given to our Christian faith a wider and fuller expression than the dogmatists that immediately followed Melancthon and his *Loci*. In a word, theology is a progressive accomplishment in Christian truths, ever rejuvenated by a fresh study of the Christian facts, the history of the Church, and Christian experience." Nobody will deny that the present-day theological teacher has to be acquainted with the aberrations manifesting themselves so painfully in the field of theology, which put tradition or human reason in the place of the revealed Word of God. If Dr. Delk had merely emphasized this point, we should have no objection to offer. But when he belittles the inerrancy of the Scriptures and praises men like Kaftan and Hermann, men who have rejected the authority of the Scriptures, we have to raise our voice in protest. At the same time, we would ask those members of the U. L. C. who are advocates of confessional Lutheranism and who are surprised that the Missouri Synod will not fellowship with them, whether they can criticize our body for standing aloof from a Church which tolerates in its ranks a heretic like Dr. Delk.

"Give the Scriptures a Chance." — Apologetics is able to marshal an imposing array of strong proofs for the divinity of the Holy Scriptures, such as "their antiquity, the majesty of the subjects discussed, harmony of all parts, dignity of the predictions, the reality of their fulfilment, divinity of the miracles by which their doctrine is confirmed, the violence of the diabolical opposition to it," etc. (Gerhard); "the singular clearness of the sacred writers, the harmonious testimony of the Church, spread over the whole earth, to the divinity of the Holy Scriptures, the constancy of the martyrs, the testimony of other nations to the doctrine contained in the Holy Scriptures, the successful and rapid propagation of the Christian doctrine through the whole world, and its wonderful preservation during so many persecutions," etc. (Hollaz). These proofs are convincing, as far as they reach, but they cannot go beyond producing a human faith. The strongest proof, and the only proof that carries with it unwavering conviction, that is, creates divine faith, is the testimony of Scripture itself. The proofs addressed to reason are good enough in their place, but they must never take the place of, or encroach upon, the testimony of Scripture. A thousand noble witnesses are speaking in behalf of Scripture. But they must not drown out the voice of Scripture speaking for itself. All this by way of introduction for the reproducing here of a most weighty statement taken from Dr. F. Pieper's Latin address delivered at the inauguration of Dr. W. H. T. Dau at Valparaiso: "How do we recognize the divine authority of Holy Scripture? I shall not cite the arguments by which human faith in the divine authority of Holy Scripture can be called forth. Let me remind you of the well-known expression: 'Give the Scriptures a chance.' Even as in the realm of nature the creatures themselves show forth and declare the Creator, so the Scripture itself, inspired of God, if it is diligently used, declares and proves its divinity." See 1 Cor. 2, 4, 5; John 7, 17; Ps. 19, 8. For collateral reading, *Lehre und Wehre*, 68, p. 161, or better still, *Christliche Dogmatik*, I, 371.

E.

Religion and Education. — The *Lutheran Church Herald* (April 19) writes editorially on this subject: "Our Church believes that the public school system of America, as it is established to-day, ruling out religious instruction, is the only possible public school system safeguarding religious liberty. If the time should ever come when the state should begin to introduce religion into the public schools, the time would be at hand when it might become necessary for us Lutherans to take our children out of the public schools. The religion to be taught in the public schools would have to be determined by the state. What kind of religion this would be would depend upon the legislatures of the various States. The question of true religion would become a political issue in the election of members of the legislatures. By majority vote they would decide what should be the state religion. Even in the strong Lutheran States it would not be the Lutheran religion, because the Lutherans have not a majority in any State of the Union. There are always some people who speak about a religion which is non-sectarian and of such

a general character that it can be subscribed to by everybody. It is, of course, possible to mention a few doctrines regarding which there is general agreement among all who profess the Christian religion, as, for instance: that there is a God; that there is a future life; that all should live a moral life to be happy. These were the general principles advocated by the English Deists, who, after many years of religious wars in England, were looking for a common ground of belief on which all men could agree. This is the religion adopted by the Masonic organization, which was organized in 1717, according to Rebold's *History of Freemasonry*. But if we should begin to emphasize some specific Christian doctrine, immediately the Jews, the Mohammedans, the Unitarians, the Universalists, and others would commence to raise objections. The essence of Christianity, that Jesus Christ is the only-begotten Son of God, one with the Father, that by His suffering and death He atoned for the sins of the world, and that salvation is through faith in Him and His redemption, would immediately bring on controversy and be branded as 'sectarianism,' to be eliminated. The result of the establishment of a state religion for the public schools would give us this least common denominator of religion, a deistic religion of such a general, nondescript character that it would, in its practical effects, antagonize the very essence of Christianity and lead our children into Unitarianism. . . . There is no common ground for religious faith of such a nature that the Christian can be satisfied with it. The Christian religion makes no compromise. It lays exclusive claim to be the only religion and condemns all other religions as false. . . . In our opinion the only possible form in which we can agree to maintain a public school system is the present, where religion is left out." MUELLER.

Proof that the Bible Is God's Word. — The following remarks of the *Lutheran Standard* are to the point and helpful when the question is asked: "How do we know that the Bible is God's Word?"

"The Holy Scriptures are inspired, and therefore we say the Bible is God's Word. But just how do I come to know and believe that the Bible is inspired and is God's Word? For one thing, the Scriptures themselves claim that they are inspired. Thus Paul says: 'All Scripture is given by inspiration of God.' It is true, this was said expressly only of the Old Testament Scriptures; but Jesus gave His Holy Spirit to His apostles, as He had promised, so that the New Testament books which they wrote are likewise inspired.

"However, this testimony is the testimony of the Scriptures themselves, and for that reason some may think it cannot have much force; it is like a man bearing witness of himself; we should rather hear some one else tell of his virtues. There are other reasons for believing that the Bible is God's Word. We shall here speak of a few. One is the unity of the Bible. Here are sixty-six books, written possibly by forty different authors taken from various walks in life, extending over a period of more than a thousand years, all authors generally writing independently of one another. Yet in all the Bible there is a beautiful harmony and a setting forth of one great thought. Only God could have made such a book.

"Another reason for believing that the Bible is God's book to men is the one great theme which runs through it. That theme is the redemption of the world through Christ. Christ and His redemption run through the entire Bible like a stream down through a broad valley; wherever you cross that valley, you come upon that stream; so wherever you cross the Bible story, you come upon Christ. Of course, not every book speaks expressly of Christ, but every book does have a part in setting forth God's preparation of the world for Christ.

"Another reason for believing that the Bible is God's book to men is the fulfilment of prophecy. Scores of events and even mere incidents were foretold hundreds of years before they took place; and they did take place just as predicted. History itself is proof of this, and the spade is piling up this sort of proof more and more in Bible lands, and the end is not yet. The greatest fulfilment, of course, is that which pertains to Christ, how everything written concerning Him came to pass. It is difficult to understand how any one who reads the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, keeping Christ Jesus in mind, can come to any other conclusion than that the Bible is God's book to men.

"However, the only finally convincing proof is the power of this Word upon one's own soul. There is a way of getting around all these other proofs if one does not want to believe; but when the Word of God rouses one's conscience to his own sinfulness and fills him with fear and dismay and then offers the blessed Gospel and enables him to rejoice in the peace of forgiveness and of salvation, then it is hard for a person any longer to evade confessing that this is God's Word and saying, 'Such power I do not find anywhere else in the world.' And when one has once felt this power and has found peace and comfort and strength in the Word, then it matters little what men may say about the Bible and the inspiration of the Scriptures; such a person will know that the Bible is God's holy Word, and no man can destroy its power nor take it from his heart."

Is the Decalog a Part of the Constitution? — Governor Richards of South Carolina, if he is reported correctly, seems to think so. He is enforcing the Sunday-closing law and announced on February 28 that as long as these laws are on the statute-books, he would endeavor to enforce them. We have no quarrel with him on that point. But he continued: The criticisms raised by certain newspapers "seem to me a little strange when it is remembered that they want laws based on the Ten Commandments enforced. 'Thou shalt not kill,' under which lynching would come; 'Thou shalt not steal.' These they want enforced, yet they condemn me for enforcing the commandments, 'Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy.'" Governor Richards seems to think that the Ten Commandments are the law of the land. Now, neither the Constitution of the United States nor that of any State has incorporated the Decalog in its provisions. Back in 1897 a Kansas legislator attempted to put the Ten Commandments on the statute-books. Section I of the bill he submitted read: "Thou shalt have no other gods before me," and the other sections enacted the

other commandments. The penalty for idolatry was fixed at \$1,000; for blasphemy, \$500; filial disobedience, the same; murder was to be punished by death and adultery by lifelong imprisonment. The bill was not enacted, but Governor Richards and a host of others think it should be. The National Reform Association is working for the Christian Amendment, which would recognize "His [the Lord Jesus'] revealed will as the supreme authority in civil affairs." That is the spirit of the Reformed churches, as expressed in Calvin's declaration: "*Officium magistratus extendi ad utramque legis tabulam.*" That is not Biblical. The Ten Commandments were, indeed, in the constitution of the Jewish state, but the Theocracy has been abolished, and in the days of the New Testament the domains of Caesar and of God are sharply delimited. That is Lutheran doctrine. "Carlstadt was insane in imposing upon us the judicial laws of Moses." (*Apology. Trigl.*, p. 331.) According to Scriptural, Lutheran, and good American doctrine it is not the province of our legislators to enact laws because of anything that is written in the Decalog. Legislation must proceed along the lines of reason and the National Law. It should prohibit murder, not, however, because of the Fifth Commandment, but because of the dictates of reason and the Natural Law.—Governor Richards would have his hands full if the Decalog were the law of the land. There is the First Commandment. Who gave the Kansas legislator the right to make idolatry punishable by a fine of \$1,000? The Decalog imposed the death penalty. Governor Richards would not only have to exclude the heathen Chinaman from his State, but in case one was smuggled in and apprehended, he would have to send him to the gallows. The same applies to the Freemason. Calvin was very consistent. With regard to Servetus, the Antitrinitarian, he said: "If ever he enters the city, he shall not leave it living if I can prevent it." And he did prevent it in the theocracy of Geneva. Further, Jewish America (it would be a misnomer to call it Christian America) would have to enforce the Ninth and Tenth Commandments, too, and make the idolatry of the lovers of money and the hatred and evil desires of the heart punishable. For all of that is covered by the Decalog. Do you still think that the word "insane," as used by the *Apology*, is too strong?—But that is not the limit of the troubles Governor Richards is invoking upon his head. He refers to the Third Commandment and wants the Sabbath-day to be kept holy. His court-preacher—for in theocracies every executive has a court-preacher or adviser in spiritual matters—is probably a Reformed minister. He is getting bad advice. Scripture teaches that the Sabbath is abolished. The provisions regarding Sabbath-labor applied only to the Jewish state. And supposing the Seventh-day Adventists should carry the next election? The Adventist court-preacher would insist that this Americo-Jewish State observe Saturday. How would the governor defend himself against the criticism of his Reformed constituents? Better not put the Decalog into the Constitution!—There is a man in New Jersey who takes the same position as Governor Richards. Associated Press, Trenton, N. J., March 7: "Blue-law advocates won their fight in the State

Assembly to-night against permitting local option in the observance of Sunday. A bill to modify the laws was defeated by just one vote. . . . 'It's repealing the Ten Commandments,' said Assemblyman Dater. . . . The bulwark of this country is the Christian Sabbath. I am proud to be in this house at a time when I can vote to support it." E.

The Church and the Spirit of the Age. — The *Presbyterian* (April 21) contains the following excellent admonition, addressed to churches which are disloyal to their Master and adapt themselves to the "spirit of the age." We read: "We are sometimes told that the Church should adapt herself to the spirit of the age; that times have changed and that she should change with them; that old methods are too stiff and old doctrines too uncompromising. This is by no means a new demand. Christianity never has been in harmony with the spirit of the age. It was not in Christ's day nor in that of the apostles and will not be unto the millennium [*sic!*]. The Church is to be peculiar. Christians are to be 'not conformed' to this world. The preaching of the Cross was and is foolishness to unbelievers. That these should see with their own eyes and should say to Christians, as Festus did to Paul, 'Thou art beside thyself,' is neither surprising nor alarming. The things which worldly people regard as folly are the Church's strength. Conformity to the world is her weakness. Her mission is to conform the world to herself and to Christ. The plea that the Church would gain in numbers by lowering her standard either of conduct or orthodoxy or benevolence, is a mistaken one. Any apparent gain would be more than balanced by a real loss."

MUELLER.

Archeology's Commentary on Is. 3. — C. Leonard Woolley, director of the joint expedition of the British Museum and the museum of the University of Pennsylvania, reporting on the work of excavating in Ur, Abraham's native city, writes that he found a complete toilet set in ivory, including a lotus-shaped mirror handle, a powder-box, a paint-pot in the form of a Sphinx, and an exquisitely engraved fine-toothed comb. "It was a set of which any lady might have been proud," he writes. Again: "The most surprising feature is the abundance of precious metal. Diadems, rings, earrings and beads of gold and silver are the rule rather than the exception. Long pins have heads of lapis lazuli mounted in silver or gold." Archeology seems to have undertaken to prove the exactness of Biblical statements and descriptions. Isaiah portrayed exactly the fashions of the day. The ladies of Ur seem to have made use of the same articles of toilet and personal adornment as were in vogue with their sisters in Jerusalem. "The bravery of the tinkling ornaments and the chains and the bracelets and the headbands and the tablets (perfumed capsules) and the earrings and the glasses and the sweet smell and the well-set hair," etc., etc. The comment of the Associated Press of February 13: "Evidence that milady in the days of Nebuchadnezzar was as careful of her beauty as her sister of the twentieth century A. D. is apparently confirmed by the 'finds' recently made at Ur of the Chaldees," calls for the remark that, as human nature itself has not changed, so, contrary to the popular dictum, fashions do not change. — And in another

respect the change and progress has not been quite so great as we moderns like to represent it. Speaking of the great hall excavated, "it might have been a royal audience chamber, put up by King Sin-Idin-nam shortly before 2000 B. C.," Woolley coolly remarks: "The remarkable feature about it was that it had undoubtedly an arched and vaulted roof, and until recently such would have been judged wholly impossible at such an early date." Compare the statement by Dr. Melvin Kyle (quoted in THEOL. MONTHLY, 7, p. 26): "This hall shows better than anything else the advanced stage of culture which this people had reached." E.

The Minister and His Time. — Time is as precious to a minister as it is to any other man of affairs; and yet of all sinners who deliberately waste time, the average pastor is perhaps the greatest. The *Watchman-Examiner*, in a recent issue, again calls attention to this much-discussed, but always vital subject, writing editorially: "That is altogether wrong. The minister's time belongs to God rather than to casual comers and goers. It is not Christian to let others steal our time and to assist in the theft. If we attend to God's will in this matter, we shall be able to 'bunch' our engagements and arrange one appointment to follow another so closely that the people we meet will be obliged to come to the point quickly, consider things promptly, and then make room for the next comer. Many precious hours can be saved by careful planning. Do not let that schedule of engagements sprawl all over the map of your life. Concentrate the items. Trot merrily through a program of these concentrated dates. Meet one committee after another the same evening. Interview between times, with five or ten minutes for each, Tom, Dick, and Harry, and the others, who would like to lounge through an hour or two. Then rejoice in the two blank pages that you have thus been able to keep clear and free in your date-book and fill them with the bigger and more important things that you would otherwise have side-tracked. All of this may seem trivial, but there are few things more vital in the minister's life and work. These words are the result of hard-won personal experience."

With regard to methods followed by others and their imitation by ministers who cannot plan their own work, the editorial says: "We can make suggestions to one another, as we have just been making them here, but in general a man must make out his own program and divide his time according to his own tastes and talents and his own peculiar ways of working. We cannot plan other people's lives. Every man to his own method, as long as the grist be ground. That man is very foolish who follows some other body's method. It is always best to study one's own particular bent and aptitude. What is one's meat may be another's poison."

The "more important things" in a minister's life which he cannot afford to side-track, are the development and maintenance of his efficiency as a preacher of the Gospel, which requires constant study and the winning of souls through the preaching of the Gospel. If he fails to accomplish this, his work must be regarded as a failure, no matter how busy he may have been in his ministry. MUELLER.

H. E. Fosdick Provided For. — If H. E. Fosdick should ever be expelled from the Baptist communion, other societies will take him in. The Ethical Culturists are offering him a "church" home, and we are sure he will feel at home with them. In an address delivered in St. Louis February 21, Henry J. Golding, a leader of the New York Ethical Society, described Dr. H. E. Fosdick as "the most advanced outpost of Liberal Christianity in the American pulpit — the man who has liberalized Liberal Christianity." H. E. Fosdick need not hesitate to accept the cordial invitation here tendered; he will find in the Ethical Culturists kindred spirits. The doctrine of these men has been thus defined: "Religion is undogmatic, purely ethical. Atheists may be moral and hence also religious. The Moral Law has immediate authority, is independent of religious theory. Moral ends are above all human interests. They are promoted by ethical culture only, which is the object of the ethical society. It teaches the science and art of right living." One cannot blame the Ethical Culturists for inviting H. E. Fosdick into their home after they read his article of last year, "The New Religious Reformation." The only thing that counts in the church reformed according to this article is "His [Jesus Christ's] fellowship with God, His Good Samaritan, His Golden Rule, His Sermon on the Mount, His law of finding life by losing it, His sincerity, His courage, His kindness, His Cross — they are not unreal. There one touches directly the supreme exhibition of spiritual life in human history." And a comparison of Fosdick's article and Golding's address shows that these two men bear a striking family likeness. Says Golding: "Enough of the religion about Jesus! What we need, says Liberal Christianity, is the religion of Jesus. Spiritual heroism is the essence of religion. How shall we awaken that valor which cannot live idly in the same world with evil? For Liberal Christians the solution is to get rid of the 1900 years and to become contemporaneous with Jesus. Hence they proclaim a new Reformation." Says Fosdick: "There are two types of Christianity. One is the religion which Jesus Christ Himself possessed and by which He lived. His filial fellowship with God, His purity, unselfishness, sincerity, sacrifice, His exaltation of spiritual values, and His love for men — the religion of Jesus. The other consists of things said of, and believed concerning, Jesus, theories to account for Him, accumulated explanations and interpretations of Him — the religion about Jesus," and it is Dr. Fosdick's business to substitute the former for the latter in his "New Religious Reformation." And the family likeness becomes the more pronounced when we look from Golding's statement: "Yet even Jesus does not represent all the best we know. No one personality, however radiant and moving, can embody all the excellences" to Fosdick's creed: "When one appeals across the centuries to the religion of Jesus, one does not mean to ascribe finality even to that, as though God had not spoken since, as though no new light had broken on the world." Of course, Fosdick has not yet quite grown up to the stature of his Ethical Culture brethren. But they will bear with him; he will, they hope, develop in their company. Horsch says of them: "The

more advanced type of modern liberalism, though, as a rule, it does not openly deny the existence of God, is practically atheistic." And Golding tells Fosdick that the rules and regulations governing the Ethical Culture house differ somewhat from what he has been accustomed to. He says: "It is more and more clearly recognized that the Christian teaching alone is inadequate to our moral needs. We need greater moral knowledge than we have. The Golden Rule yields limited guidance in the complexities of to-day." (Fosdick's "New Reformation" is not quite radical enough.) "Nor can we find in the gospels the true ideal of marriage of which we are in search." Certainly Dr. Fosdick will repudiate these and similar dogmas. He will feel at home in the vestibule of the new home opened to him, but will refuse to enter into its inmost sanctuary. But it should give him pause that these men are hailing him as a kindred spirit and asking him to come in. E.

The Bible Not out of Date — not even in the matter of courtship and marriage. It has long been the fashion to poke fun at the story of Isaac and Rebekah as related Gen. 24. Following the fashion set by Esau, Gen. 28, 8, 9, modern youth is refusing to be bound by the order laid down by Moses, Deut. 7, 3, and Paul, 1 Cor. 7, 36—38. They have been telling each other, and some of their elders have been telling them, that the Biblical regulations requiring the young people who are contemplating marriage to seek their parents' advice and obtain their consent are no longer applicable. Now comes Dr. Joseph Collins, eminent New York neurologist, and testifies to the wisdom of the divine order. Not that he would care to be hailed as a champion of Biblical ideals. He believes, according to the *American Review of Reviews* of March, 1927, "that something more suited to modern life than marriage as it is to-day will undoubtedly be devised." He does not stand for the old order,—and unwittingly he is supporting it. "Dr. Collins believes in marriages arranged by other than the contracting parties, who can judge far more sanely than the love-blinded candidates." The *Popular Commentary* believes that 1 Cor. 7, 36—38 is not out of date: "It would be well for modern parents to heed these words of the apostle and not to permit their children to contract foolish and frivolous marriages, particularly when they are not yet able to realize the obligations and responsibilities which the married state imposes upon both husband and wife." Some of our young people say that was written by an old fogey. But Dr. Collins is ultra-modern, and, being a good observer, he recognizes the need of stringent regulations. The chances, however, are that he will try to improve on the divine order, and our young people who ridicule parental authority and love and wisdom may some day have to do their courting under the supervision of a State and National Board. E.

The Buddhist Sunday-School Movement.—"The Buddhist Sunday-school Movement in Japan is to a large extent a result of the Eighth World's Sunday-school Convention in Tokyo," writes the *Sunday-school Times* (Jan., 1927). "This gathering seemed to open the eyes of Buddhists to the importance of capturing the children,

and, as a consequence, there are now some four thousand Sunday-schools, with six hundred thousand pupils and thirteen thousand teachers under Buddhist auspices in Japan. Those back of the movement have not only equipped schools with organs, blackboards, and hymnals, but have established a Department of Religious Education in the Buddhist College of West Honganji, with courses in child psychology, pedagogy, Sunday-school management, music, nursery, methods, and story-telling, quite in the style of American theoreticians. A summer institute is held for teachers yearly in the Honganji Temple."

"These schools," the report proceeds, "have the sympathy of the municipal authorities and public school teachers, who are, in most cases, at least nominal Buddhists. They have the backing of the well-to-do. They have the use of innumerable temples, whereas the Christian Sunday-schools are largely held in uninspiring hired quarters. They have a far larger constituency to draw on for teachers; for there are as many Buddhist priests in Japan as members of all the Protestant churches. *But they have no Gospel.* Their Buddhism is vague and inconsequent and little adapted for children's thought. Worse than all, the Buddhist Sunday-schools are being backed financially by brewers and prostitute owners, and the real reason for their existence is to head off the advance of the Christian Sunday-school."

The fact that Buddhism has no Gospel marks it for ultimate defeat by Christianity, provided Christian missionaries really preach the Gospel of Christ. But here's the rub. Liberalism has reached the mission-fields and is doing more harm to the evangelization of Japan than Buddhism, which is effete and dead. MUELLER.

Wanted: an Expurgated Bible.—"A possible reason for the crime wave may be the teachings of the Sunday-school, says Charles Haven Myers, pastor of a Cleveland, O., Church, in *Scribner's*. Dr. Myers is concerned with the wrong ethical twist which can be given the young boy who studies the brigands of the Old Testament as 'heroes' to be revered merely because they are in the Bible. If the lives of these men are to be told to children, they must be greatly cut and told as stories of half-mythical characters. If Genesis is to be taught, it must be taught as folk-lore." (*Am. Review of Reviews*, March, 1927.) Attention is here called to this theory of Dr. Myers not so much on account of the wickedness of any theory which treats the Bible as a possible source of wickedness, but rather for the purpose of pointing out that it is simply a corollary of the denial of inspiration. While it is true that "they that are unlearned and unstable" may "wrest" the Scriptures "unto their own destruction" (2 Pet. 3, 16), only those who view the Bible as in whole or in part the product of man can harbor the thought that some of its teachings are vicious and are forced to apply the remedy proposed, to cut out the harmful portions. We are not surprised at the appointment of censors charged with the duty of expurgating the plays presented to New York audiences, and we are not surprised to hear men who believe in the human authorship of the Bible call for a Board of Censors. The corollary of the statement that "all Scripture is

given by inspiration of God" is that "it is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." 2 Tim. 3, 16. But if Scripture is not given by inspiration, if portions of it have been written by fallible men, it needs most careful editing and pitiless expurgation. E.

What is Going On on the Stage. — Goethe knew what was going on there in his day, and he said that the stage was an institution devoted to refined sensuality. Dumas, author of *Camille*, knew what was going on at a later period and advised a friend not to take his daughter to see this play, — "do not take her to the theater at all." At a still later period Miss Roselle Knot, who played the leading part in *A Modern Magdalen*, said: "When my two little children asked me to read *Magdalen* to them, I had to refuse, and I could not give them the reason." What is going on on the stage to-day? Florenz Ziegfeld ought to know. An Associated Press dispatch of March 1 tells what he knows. "Florenz Ziegfeld thinks box office madness and out-of-town visitors are to blame for the present 'corrupt' condition of the theater. 'I'm ashamed to be in the revue business,' he said, 'so I'm going to get out.' 'The modern revue,' said the producer, 'is far worse than the old burlesque show. In fact, the revues have driven the burlesque shows out of business. The stage in New York has been corrupted to the point where it is risky to take one's own mother, wife, or children to the theater, not because there is a large public that wants filth, but because the theatrical people have gone box-office crazy. The revues have gone too far. Stories such as are heard in smoking cars are being acted out. Nudity has become the order of the day, and the beauty of the draped figure has been forgotten.'" So the stage has got down to unrefined sensuality. Somebody is remarking that all theaters are not devoted to unrefined sensuality. Granted. But what was it that caused some producers to cater, instead of to refined, to unrefined sensuality? There is a natural devolution from refined to unrefined sensuality. Your friend may to-day be fully satisfied with what his favorite theater is offering him. To-morrow he may have a craving for something stronger. E.

Glimpses from the Editor's Window.

John Wesley's proof of inspiration is worth noting: "The Bible is a fact which cannot be denied. How, then, did we get it? It must have come from good men or angels, or from bad men or devils, or from God. It could not have come from good men or good angels, for they would not constantly lie, saying, 'Thus saith the Lord,' hundreds of times. It could not have come from bad men or devils, for it would be impossible to imagine bad men and devils to be such fools as to write so of themselves. Therefore it must be from God."

Eight of our Presidents have been Episcopalians; seven, Presbyterians; four, Methodists; four, Unitarians; two have belonged to the Dutch Reformed Church; one has been a Baptist; one, a Congregationalist; one, a member of the so-called Christian or Disciples Church. Jefferson alone had no particular church connection. — *American Review of Reviews*.

In Moscow we are told the inhabitants are more and more turning away from Baptism and Christian marriage rites. It is chiefly when people are at the point of death that an overwhelming majority deems the presence of a priest worth while. There is in that unfortunate city a

League of the Wicked, which announces that in 1925 fifty-six per cent. of the children were baptized, in 1926, fifty-four per cent. Of burials, sixty-five per cent. are performed with Christian ceremonies. The *Christliche Apologete*, from whose columns we take this information, adds that one must not be led to conclude that all of Russia is discarding religion to the same extent. Especially in the country districts atheism has not been so successful.

"The United Presbyterian Church," the *Christian Herald* writes, "has made a wonderful record in Egypt with schools. There are at present 195, with an enrolment of 16,611 pupils. More than three-fourths of all expenses of these schools are met by the Egyptian themselves. The pupils in these schools number many nationalities and creeds. Christian and Moslem Egyptians, Italians, Greeks, French, Maltese, Armenians, Roumanians, and Jewish." Let us hope that these pupils are not taught merely secular knowledge, but are made acquainted with the Gospel of salvation.

There are about forty-eight million church-members in the United States, of whom one-third are Roman Catholics, somewhat more than one-third are Methodists and Baptists in almost equal parts, and somewhat less than one-third are Presbyterians, Lutherans, Disciples of Christ, Episcopalians, Congregationalists and members of numerous other, lesser bodies.

American Review of Reviews.

It seems that the Bible is beginning to be spread extensively among the Catholics of Italy. Even among the clergy, Bible-reading is gaining ground. The holy Book is entering hospitals, factories, and barracks. A colonel bought forty copies for the officers of his regiment. It is true that the version of the Bible sold to the Catholics of Italy is that one which has the *imprimatur* of Rome. But even so, one must rejoice that the Word is spreading. Here, if anywhere, it is true that half a loaf is better than nothing at all.

Now and then even a cardinal does or says something that is commendable. *Time* reports that recently a cardinal had been invited to a dinner in Rome at which there was present a lady with a very immodest dress. The cardinal ignored her till the dessert, when he placed one half of an apple on her plate, saying: "You must eat it, for when Eve ate the apple, she knew she was naked and felt ashamed."

Speaking of the coming World Conference on Faith and Order, which is to meet at Lausanne, Switzerland, next August, Charles Evans Hughes, who is General Chairman of the American Committee preparing the Conference, which has for its aim the unification of the Christian forces, says: "My personal view is that the closer we come to the simplicity of the teaching of Jesus, the more united we shall be." Yes, but it is very important that all the teachings of Jesus be adhered to and not merely a few to which our reason does not object.

Two years ago Rome broke off relations with Czechoslovakia because the government had participated in celebrations in honor of John Huss. Now the report comes that the Vatican has relented and has accepted Czechoslovakian explanations of the occurrences that were so objectionable to Rome. The Vatican is shrewd, whatever else it may be.

An exchange states that in 1925 three million gallons of wine which had been bought to be used for sacramental purposes were put to a different use. That is quite a serious indictment, if it is true.

Elmer Gantry is the title of the outstanding novel of the month of March. One reviewer says that Sinclair Lewis here writes "with less art and subtlety, but with great vehemence, brutal cleverness, and penetrating caricature." Another one says *Elmer Gantry* is "a rough-neck book with little art to commend it, but with great power and great interest." We quote a critic writing in the *Chicago American*: "When he [Sinclair Lewis] wallowed in the pigsty for atmosphere and smeared his dirt over the cloth of the clergy, he descended to the level of a literary 'cheap skate' and has invited the god of American literary refinement to 'strike him dead' with a vengeance."

BOOK REVIEW.

Evangelism. A Handbook for Workers. By *Prof. Edward Pfeiffer, D.D.* 93 pages, 4½×6. 50 cts. (The Lutheran Book Concern, Columbus, O.) Order from Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.

In the foreword, written by the editor of the Commission on Evangelization of the Joint Synod of Ohio, the Rev. W. A. Poovey, he says: "Love for souls is a passion that burns like a hidden fire in the hearts of those who become partakers of the blood-bought salvation in Christ. It is not necessary to tell them to labor for the saving of others. They already know this. The Spirit of God, who wrought their conversion, testifies within them that they are chosen vessels of the Lord, through whom the glad tidings of salvation are to be imparted to a dying world. . . . However, the earnest lover of souls is at times confronted with the question, How shall I effectively undertake this work? Many mistakes are made by well-meaning workers of the Church, not because of any lack of interest in the spiritual welfare of others, but because the wrong method of approach is adopted. Soul-saving as well as anything else must be conducted according to certain rules if it is to be done in a successful manner. To study methods and ways to prosecute this God-given work more intensively, the Joint Synod of Ohio has appointed a Commission on Evangelization, by whose approval and recommendation this manual is edited." The little book by Dr. Pfeiffer was written as a text on evangelism to be used at the Columbus Theological Seminary; it may, however, also profitably be used to instruct church-members in the work of saving souls. The opportunities for bringing the Gospel to the unchurched are many, and the Church ought not to be negligent in its duty toward such. But the Church ought also to seek to hold its own members, many of whom are slipping away more or less unnoticed.

FRITZ.

Handbook of All Denominations. Compiled by *M. Phelan.* 215 pages. \$1.25. (Cokesbury Press, Nashville, Tenn.) Order from Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.

This book brings the *Populaere Symbolik* (Guenther-Fuerbringer), the last edition of which, in 1913, was right up to date, up to date. It cannot take the place of the *Populaere Symbolik*, which because of its exhaustive and authoritative presentation of the doctrines of the Lutheran Church and the teachings of the sects, is indispensable to every Lutheran minister and should be in the hands of every other Christian minister. Phelan's *Handbook*, however, supplies a real need. It chronicles some of the recent developments in the older denominations, lists a number of new organizations, and embodies the latest statistical material from advance proofs of the newest *Year-Book of the Churches*. "The Evangelical Protestants have recently united with the Congregationalists" (the majority of them), "the two bodies of the Evangelical Church were reunited in 1921—22," the Northern Baptists granted in 1926, by a majority vote, "the privilege to each local church 'to determine for itself whether it shall receive into its membership immersed applicants without rebaptism.'" The Pentecostal Church of the Nazarene (Guenther, p. 59) is now known as the Church

of the Nazarene, the Holiness Churches (Guenther, p. 84) have increased and multiplied; there is the Church of God, General Assembly; the Assemblies of God, General Council; Holiness Church; Pentecostal Holiness Church; Pilgrim Holiness Church, etc. We are introduced to the Angelus Temple, the American Rescue Workers, the Messianic World Message, the Scandinavian Evangelical Churches, to the Theosophical Messiah, Krishnamurti "in tennis flannels and wrist-watch." Here are Landmark Baptists and Black Jews (colored folk who claim to be the descendants of the lost tribes). The Christian Catholic Church in Zion "is no longer listed in statistical or other reports as a religious denomination." (*The Year-Book*, indeed, no longer lists it, but its religious propaganda is being carried on as strenuously as ever, as witness its *Leaves of Healing* and its radio station.) — Total membership of all Methodist bodies in the United States, 8,920,190; Baptist, 8,397,914; Presbyterian, 2,561,986; Lutheran, 2,546,127. — "The supreme authority of the Pope, it is claimed, extends over the temporal as well as the spiritual affairs of the world." "The principle of civil and religious liberty and the separation of Church and State are condemned in the Syllabus of Errors of Pope Pius IX." — "The Lutherans believe 'in the real presence of Christ's body and blood in, with, and under the bread and wine during the sacramental fruition,' a doctrine usually called by English writers consubstantiation; but the term is rejected by the Lutherans. 'Body and blood are not mixed with, nor locally included in, but sacramentally and mysteriously united with the elements.'" "In other Protestant systems the sole office of the Word is to point the way of life. In Lutheranism it communicates that whereof it treats.'" "During recent years the Lutheran bodies have shown a larger percentage of growth than any of the other large Protestant bodies in the United States. This is due, in part, to immigration; but the Lutherans are very aggressive, and their church activities are manifold and constantly expanding." E.

The Unity of Faith and Knowledge. Problems of Philosophy and Christian Theism. By *John A. W. Haas*, President of Muhlenberg College. 250 pages, 5×7½. \$2.00. (The Macmillan Company, New York.) Order from Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.

This volume contains a number of lectures which President Haas prepared for the students of Muhlenberg College as an antidote against the destructive influence of modern materialistic and agnostic science. The author purposes to show that "it is possible to accept the best results of modern learning without becoming agnostic and to guide the student in his search for a balanced position, one in which he does not have to espouse ignorance to remain religious nor reject religion and become skeptical to maintain scientific truth and freedom." The real scientific facts are not at variance with theistic belief. The problems of nature, of mind, and of value (the test of truth, the goal of the good, the demand for the deity, etc.) find their solution in the "final religion, Christianity, whose center is the divine-human personality of Jesus Christ." "A sound philosophy and a right faith are abundantly able to live together in peace and harmony." (p. 238.) We are in deep sympathy with the author's purpose of demonstrating the truth that it is a fallacy to assume that the study of

philosophy and science must of necessity lead to the rejection of the Christian religion. Only, like every other apologist, he is treading dangerous ground. The antinomy between "the wisdom of man" and "the wisdom of God" can never be removed. The "best results of modern learning" are in most cases not incontestable facts, but mere theories advanced by agnostic scientists for the purpose of eviscerating the Gospel of its mystery and destroying the positive religious truths of the Bible. The gap between faith and infidelity can never be bridged, and the student must be made to see that if scientists leave the realm of known and demonstrable facts, they are no longer giving the world "the best results of modern learning." Of special value are the "summaries," in which the author briefly, but clearly points out how the discussion of each "problem" invariably leads the truth-seeker to Him who is "the Way, the Truth, and the Life."

MUELLER.

An Outline of Christian Doctrine. By *Werner Elert*, Professor in Erlangen. Translated by *Charles M. Jacobs*, Professor in the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia. 112 pages. \$1.00. (The United Lutheran Publication House, Philadelphia, Pa.)

"This volume introduces to American readers a new author and a new system of theology. . . . He [the author] has recently entered the faculty at Erlangen, famous for three quarters of a century as the stronghold of a theology that has aimed to be both conservative and scientific. . . . The value of the book lies in its new approach to the problems of theology." (C. M. Jacobs.) It is a typical product of the modern Lutheran scientific theology. 1) The language is highly scientific, ponderous in the extreme, and frequently baffles comprehension. What would you make of these paragraphs: "§ 29. The Reality and Spontaneity of the Spirit. Viewed from the human standpoint, spirit (*pneuma*) is impersonal; nevertheless it is, at the same time, superpersonal. The spiritual atmosphere breathed by those of whom the Gospel laid hold unites individuals in the communion (2 Cor. 13, 13) and unity of the Spirit (Eph. 4, 3). This unity is not the sum of spiritual possessions belonging to the individuals. It is rather a dynamic unity, which, from one central point, pours out a stream of energies. Acts 1, 8; Rom. 15, 19; 2 Tim. 1, 7. . . . § 30. Divine Personality. The inner unity of the Spirit and its reality as something outside ourselves and distinct from the men in whom it resides, makes it possible for us to call it 'the Spirit,' without misunderstanding the term." To allay the suspicion that the translation (which is an admirable piece of work) is to blame, we shall give the last sentence in the original: "*Die innere Einheit, Transsubjektivitaet und Spontaneitaet des πνεῦμα laesst es uns gegenueber als einheitliches Subjekt erscheinen, so dass wir nunmehr, nachdem wir seine Unterschiedenheit von den menschlichen Geistestraegern begriffen haben, ohne Missverstaendnis das deutsche Wort 'der Geist' gebrauchen koennen.*" If a theologian cannot present the Bible truths in simple or, at least, clear language, he should devote his energies to astronomy or metaphysics. — 2) Modern theology applies the scientific treatment to the Bible (and that accounts, in part, for the ponderosity of the language). Our author's chief aim is, not simply to present the Bible truths, but to demonstrate their truth from necessary premises and to develop them along

the lines of logical thought. The greater part of the book consists of philosophical argumentations, which, indeed, wind up with the recurrence to Scripture; and it is only this belated recurrence to Scripture that somewhat justifies the title of the original, *Die Lehre des Luthertums im Abriss*. Part I, "The Conflict with God," is hardly anything but a metaphysical treatise; Part II and III, "Reconciliation, Freedom," deal more with Scripture, but are also vitiated by the scientific method. Take, for instance, the paragraph on Justification: "§ 33. (a) God's great act of reconciliation has compelled us to believe that the ultimate motive which has determined His whole relation to us was love. (Rom. 5, 8; cf. § 31.) But if our conviction of God's holiness (§ 18a) is not to be destroyed, we must be sure that He neither blindly surrenders to an emotion of love nor fails to meet His responsibilities as Judge. We are sure of the former fact because His love to us has caused Him to make the tremendous sacrifice of His own Son (Rom. 8, 32). But we can only be certain that He has been faithful to His office as Judge if we know that He has not ignored our guilt, but condemned it. The condemnation is contained in His demand that we have faith. For faith is the transformation of our souls from a state of hostility and rebellion to a state of willing submission (§ 31). So far as God is concerned, therefore, our conflict with Him is actually at an end. We stand before Him no longer as rebels, but as righteous men, i. e., as men who are blameless in His sight: 'To him that believeth faith is counted for righteousness' (Rom. 4, 5)." It is surely a roundabout way to approach the justice and wrath of God by way of "His demand that we have faith." The condemnation of our guilt is contained in the Law. Under (b) our author presents the Scriptural doctrine in the Scriptural way: "We are saved by faith (Acts 16, 31), reconciled to God through His not reckoning our trespasses against us (2 Cor. 5, 19)." The reason why faith justifies, faith being the acceptance of the Gospel's offer of forgiveness, is, however, not mentioned. That is the Scriptural *rationale* of the matter. Giving a scientific *rationale*, as presented under (a), the author has vitiated the great doctrine of justification. — 3) "This volume introduces a new system of theology." The key-note of the new system is, if we are not mistaken, "the will to freedom." The phrase occurs on, perhaps, every third page. Part I is, to a great extent, a deduction from man's will to freedom, — and, as it happens, man's conflict with God is indeed the result of his will to freedom (which is not admitting that the author's treatment of the matter of sin is an improvement on the Scriptural treatment). The author does not attempt to deduce Parts II and III from the established fact of the will to freedom. On the contrary, he states in the Foreword to the German book: "*Die Versöhnung ist zum organisierenden Prinzip der ganzen Dogmatik gemacht worden.*" Nevertheless, "the will to freedom" is continually obtruding itself upon, and influencing, the treatment of Parts II and III. "The great act of reconciliation was performed to make us certain that our will to freedom shall be fulfilled" (p. 108). The great act of reconciliation was performed primarily to save us from sin and damnation! "We feel the sovereignty of God, no longer as a limitation upon our will to be free, but as a loving approval of that will (§ 27). Faith is confidence in this" (p. 63). "If we have allowed ourselves to be reconciled to God, it is in order that we escape

the great dilemma and be forced to deny neither our own life nor the life of God" (p. 81). "He lives, thirdly, in love to other creatures, . . . *i. e.*, in the feeling that he is united with all other creatures in the longing to be free (Rom. 8, 22)" (p. 89). — 4) Dr. Elert is an exponent of the Christian-experience theology: the certainty of faith is based, not on Scripture, but on experience, and experience, not Scripture, is the source of theology. From the Bible we get "a clearer idea of what we had already felt within the limits of our own experience of fate" (p. 36). First ask experience, then go to the Bible! "These Biblical utterances about God add nothing absolutely new to the impressions gained from experience of fate" (p. 37). The question whether "the whole description of our experience of fate . . . has not been unconsciously influenced by the Bible," "would possess an interest only for methodology, and with that we are not here concerned" (p. 37). So far Dr. Elert has been speaking of matters that belong also in the sphere of natural theology. What about the saving grace of God? "So long as this second group of divine motives has no confirmation in our own experience, we can allow it only hypothetical validity" (p. 39). The mere testimony of Scripture does not, according to Dr. Elert, establish the absolute validity of the Gospel-promises. On page 53, "after several postponements," Dr. Elert is ready to tell us on what to base our faith: "The question is whether we are able to share the impression which the New Testament men had of the divine sovereignty of Christ, or, to use the New Testament term, whether we can 'believe on Him.'" "The question is, Does He also forgive?" "We answer in the affirmative, because we share the impression of the man who wrote the Epistle to the Hebrews and who, like us, did not see Christ face to face." And how did the first disciples come to believe in Him? "Looking upon Christ, they had the immediate impression that God is benevolent and kind, merciful and gracious." So, then, faith cometh by experience. And the definition of faith need not mention the Word. "Our faith is . . . a new attitude of our soul to God, called forth by reconciliation" (p. 65); and: "Faith is a definite attitude of the soul to the personality of Christ" (p. 62). Nor need any mention of the written Word be made in the definition of theology. "The task of theology is to clarify and do away with differences by deepening and interpreting our knowledge of the historical foundations of the Church" (p. 75); and: "The scientific language of the time must be employed to testify to our contemporaries, as impressively as may be, what the Gospel has made of our souls" (p. 12). The theologian and preacher must testify, first of all, what Scripture says! — 5) Is Scripture the inspired, inerrant Word of God, or is it merely the record, fallible at times, of revelation? "The New Testament, which all of us have in our hands, is unimpeachable evidence that a large, but very definite circle of men saw the life of Jesus as here described and placed upon it the estimate here recorded" (p. 48). "By means of the Bible, God acquaints us with the fate of the men of the Bible, with their collisions with Him, and with their views, progressively ripened and tested in a long history, concerning the mysteries of His life, of our origin, and of our certainty of death" (p. 47). In the *Conspectus Locorum Theologicorum Antiquitus Acceptorum Usibus Traditionem Amanitium Accommodatus*, which the author has kindly appended to his treatise, we find "*De Scriptura Sacra*, § 15.20," but neither here

nor there anything *De Inspiratione*. But naturally we find this: "Evidently and admittedly some of these [documents gathered together in the Bible] possess high historical value"; "we must reckon, at the outset, with the possibility of literary fictions"; however, "we can scarcely imagine a greater historical certainty" (p. 34), "even though we may have to reckon with the possibility of a false interpretation of the history on the part of those who relate it" (p. 36); and: "The interest which Paul, the Jew, shows in the question concerning the election of the Jewish people (Rom. 9—11) is replaced, in the man of to-day, by the question concerning the election or reprobation of his own people" (p. 65).—Some details: Substitution, § 25, is presented as a real substitution, but we miss the explicit statement that Christ bore our sins. The paragraph on Faith (§ 31) makes no mention of the forgiveness of sins. The paragraph on Grace (§ 32) makes no explicit mention of the forgiveness of sins. It does describe God's offer of peace and states that "the whole world is the object of reconciliation"; there is also the explicit declaration on page 67 that "the Shepherd, giving His life for us (John 10, 11) has atoned for our transgressions"; but why should the author be so chary of the use of the term "forgiveness of sin"? It is not mentioned in connection with the Lord's Supper and only obscurely in connection with Baptism. On Faith: "Faith, as the expression of our will to be at peace with God, must show itself, first of all, in willing submission (Rom. 1, 5)" (p. 63). Why does faith justify? "If we are to partake of the reconciliation that is offered us, then the will to be at peace must take the place of enmity both in us and in God" (or: in us as it did in God). "Therefore faith, as the expression of our will to be at peace with God, must show itself, first of all, in willing submission." Turn again to the paragraph on justification (see above). Why does faith justify? Not because faith appropriates the proffered pardon, but because we, by faith, cease to be rebels; because by and in faith we take the right attitude; because of a transformation of our souls; because of something in us. On the Lord's Supper: "His saying that He is giving His body and blood when He gives bread and wine can only mean that He is promising the gift of His human life" (p. 71). On the Church: Our author distinguishes between the communion of saints and the Church. "The communion of saints possesses a temporal life and like everything that lives in time, it is subject to the succession of the generations and to differentiation. It is only as we think of it in this way that we call it the Church" (p. 70). The membership of both is not the same (p. 73, according to the original); yet the "Church" is not the visible church, for "it cannot be defeated," and "is the union of all those who, in newness of life, reach out for liberty" (p. 105). Still it is not the communion of saints. What is it?—"Christ raises the demands of the Moral Law to unheard of heights" (p. 50). "So long as the rules made by the councils are not proved to be erroneous, care must be taken that those who exercise the Church's elementary functions do not contradict or oppose these rules" (p. 76). "It is through the intensive experience of the conflict with God that life is spurred to its highest achievements" (p. 32). "It is from the passions and desires that come of a natural inheritance, now redeemed from enmity to God and from guilt, that the Christian derives the elemental forces with which to overcome opposing

powers" (p. 88). — Portions of the book have the Lutheran ring: "To this grace we owe our salvation (Eph. 2, 5). Our attitude towards God's offer of peace is purely receptive, even in its first beginnings, and thus the fact that we are Christians rests entirely on an act of God's grace (1 Cor. 15, 10)." "If any one who hears the message, 'Be ye reconciled,' is not reconciled because he refuses to believe it, it is his own fault that the conflict between him and God goes on. . . . If we, on the contrary, have become believers, that does not alter the fact that God's election is a pure act of grace" (§ 32). "The attempt to establish external unity where unity of the faith (Eph. 4, 5) does not exist must produce indifference to error and thus defeat the hope of true unity" (p. 76). "For this reason we cannot content ourselves, even within the Lutheran part of Christendom, with the establishment of external unity" (p. 11). "Any attempt to make Christ Ruler of the kingdoms of the world (cf. John 6, 15) is a secularization of the Church" (p. 72). — In the Preface, Dr. Elert speaks of the Eisenach Lutheran World Convention as having begun the establishment of a great unity of all Lutheran churches and of the special task of the American sister churches in the great movements for the unification of Lutheranism. The work of unification calls for a straightforward discussion of the differences. E.

With Christ through Lent. By *Rev. J. M. G. Darms, D. D.* 201 pages, 5½×8. \$1.00 (Central Publishing House, Cleveland, O.)

This volume contains special meditations for every day during Lent, to be read either privately or in the family circle. Each devotion is composed of a Lenten reading (selection from the Bible), a discussion of an important topic connected with Lent, a meditative Thought, a prayer, and a hymn verse. Among the subjects discussed are the following: "The Challenge of Lent," "Christ in the Home," "The Friends of Christ," "The Art of Prayer," "A Christless Church," "The thorn-crowned Christ," etc. The author is an earnest believer in the crucified Christ and teaches salvation through faith in Him; but his Reformed faith shows itself time and again, as do also his Arminian views. The prayers, which reveal great spiritual insight, manifest the deep piety of the author, who closes his preface with the words: "May the Christ go with us not only through Lent, but *through life!* We need the eternal Christ more than ever; for 'there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved' than the name of Jesus Christ and *Him crucified.*"

MUELLER.

Making Good in the Ministry. A sketch of John Mark. By *Prof. A. T. Robertson*, Professor of New Testament Interpretation, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky. 171 pages. \$1.50. (George H. Doran Company, New York.) Order from Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.

For thirty-nine years Professor Robertson has been a "teacher of young preachers" in the Baptist Theological Seminary at Louisville, Ky. In "bookland" he is known as the author of about forty books, among which his *Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research* is the most prominent. The present volume first appeared in 1918 and has enjoyed a remarkable sale. It treats the life of John Mark

in the light of Scripture, tradition, and modern New Testament research. It is well and interestingly written, though the title *Making Good in the Ministry* is really too narrow for the evangelist's life. The tendency to deal with Mark's life from this angle sometimes compels the author to make prominent some facts while others are somewhat slighted. On the question of the composition of Mark the writer does not express himself with finality, but usually quotes the views of scholars, leaving the reader to form his own opinion. Such questions are: "Did Mark use the Logia of Jesus (Q)?" "How did the original gospel of Mark close?" etc. Withal, it is a most readable and instructive volume which Dr. Robertson has given to the public and a fine appreciation of Mark and his work. MUELLER.

Pulpit Prayers and Paragraphs. By *William L. Stidger, D. D.*, author of *Symphonic Sermons*, etc. 208 pages. \$1.75. (George H. Doran Company, New York.)

These *Pulpit Prayers and Paragraphs* were published because in the opinion of the author "our churches do not link up with life." For this reason he has provided his fellow-preachers with prayers that "leaped hot from the heart of the preacher." To direct the attention of his congregations to the beautiful in nature, he has added "Beatitudes of the Beautiful." To enlighten the world, he, in addition, offers a new series of "Ten Commandments," "which flashed all over the United States and caught fire at once," as the author very modestly tells us. Lastly, the book contains "Pulpit Editorials," which are "a scheme to comment on civic affairs." It is a Christ-less, Gospel-less, salvation-less book which the author has given us, and his prayers, editorials, and ten commandments contain not a single word about sin and grace. Christ, the Savior, in the beauty of His healing grace, is never mentioned. We pity the congregations that must listen to such chaff of endless, meaningless, powerless words, which Dr. Stidger offers them Sunday after Sunday. We review the book only because it has had a tremendous sale and has been recommended to the public in the most flattering terms. MUELLER.

The Challenge of Youth. By *Alfred E. Stearns*. \$1.25. (W. A. Wilde Co., Boston, Chicago.) Order from Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.

Here we have a stirring appeal to parents and educators to attend to the moral and spiritual needs of our youth. The book has some sections which are of great value. I would mention especially the chapter on "The Home in Civilization." From a literary point of view the production is excellent. Theologically it is weak. The writer now and then misapplies Bible-passages, for instance, when he quotes the words of Jesus: "He who loses his life shall save it," with respect to the action of a young man who heroically gave himself up to rescue work in a case of fire and there was injured fatally; or when he takes the words of Joel: "Your young men shall see visions" to refer to the visions young people have of excellence and greatness. The statement of the author, "Youth at heart is sound," is, to say the least, misleading. That the youth of our country needs Christ and His redemption is not pointed out.

A Guide to the Study of the English Bible. By *Hersey Everett Spence* and *James Cannon III.* 187 pages, 5×7½. Third edition. \$1.25. (Cokesbury Press, Nashville, Tenn.) Order from Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.

This book offers a series of 84 studies, in outline form, of the Old and New Testament and the Apocrypha, with maps and review questions. The outlines appear to be very practical. Our pastors will find them valuable for their Bible-class work. The reviewer, of course, does not sanction all the statements in the book. A Lutheran reader will at once notice the fact that the Messianic portions of the Old Testament are not sufficiently stressed; there is, for example, no rubric for Messianic psalms in the authors' outlines on the poetical books of the Bible. W. G. P.

Satan; His Personality, Power, and Overthrow. By *Edward M. Bounds.* 157 pages. \$1.25. (Fleming H. Revell Company, New York.) Order from Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.

It is encouraging to a believing Christian that such books as the present volume are still published and sold. In our time of almost universally prevailing infidelity it takes courage to teach orally or in writing the Scripture doctrine concerning the devil and his evil work. In most church circles of to-day the existence of a personal devil is flatly denied and only "the principle of evil" acknowledged as a fact. No doubt, this book will receive contempt and ridicule; it is all the more necessary that believing Christians support those who accept the Bible facts and bear witness to them. The book is divided into three main divisions, treating in sixteen chapters as the title shows, the personality, the power, and the overthrow of the devil. The three means of defense against the devil are, as the author points out, constant watchfulness in true faith, diligent use of the Gospel of Christ, and earnest prayer. While the reviewer cannot subscribe to every statement made in the book, he gladly acknowledges that the writer has diligently searched the Scriptures for information and rests his teaching on that ground. For pastors wishing to treat the subject-matter in sermons this book is an excellent guide and aid. MUELLER.

The Heretic's Defense. By *Henry Preserved Smith.* (Charles Scribner's Sons, New York.) 130 pages. \$1.50.

The well-known Henry Preserved Smith in this volume gives a detailed account of his defection from the Presbyterian Church, particularly on the question of the verbal inspiration of Scripture. He clearly shows that he is not in accord with this fundamental dogma of orthodox Christianity. W. G. P.

A China Shepherdess. By *Margaret T. Applegarth.* 323 pages, 5½×8. \$1.75. (The Judson Press, Philadelphia.)

This is the story of a young lady who, after some struggle with herself, devoted her life to mission-work in China. Each chapter forms a story by itself and is amply illustrated. The purpose of the book is to foster missionary interest, and directions are given how the story may be told to children by teachers of Sunday-schools, etc. MUELLER.

BIBLE HISTORY REFERENCES

Volume II

Seldom has a book found such great and universal favor among reviewers and purchasers as has the first volume of Rupprecht's *Bible History References*. Ever since this book has reached the market, repeated inquiries as to the time of publication of the second volume, which has just left the press, have been received by the publishers.

And well does the painstaking work of the author merit all the praise that has been heaped upon it; for Rupprecht has succeeded not only in rendering available in concise and compact form a great many practical helps and suggestions for a thorough explanation, elucidation, and application of the Bible stories, but also in improving every opportunity offered in the lessons to point out where and how our Lord and Savior manifested forth His glory: His omnipotence, omniscience, and other divine attributes, His Messiahship in general, and, in particular, every phase of His great work of redemption.

Special features worthy of particular mention are: The numerous geographical, archeological, and historical references; annotations concerning the following and similar subjects: The Herodians; the Magi; education of Jewish children; the Pharisees; brief biographical sketches of the disciples of Christ; leprosy; classification of the parables of Christ; survey of the Passion week; how shepherds separated their mixed flock at nightfall; a description of the celebration of the Passover; the miraculous eclipse at the time of the death of Christ; summary of all the appearances of the risen Savior; the countries in which each of the apostles labored; answers to questions such as these: "Holy Innocents," why so called? Why did Jesus sometimes tell people whom He had healed that they should "tell no man"? Why was Jesus crucified "without the gate"? What was the difference between Peter's and Judas's sorrow? Why did the resurrected Lord not want Mary Magdalene to touch Him?

Other helps that make the book invaluable are the frequent references to the Catechism, not only at the end of, but also throughout, the lessons; hymn references as well as Bible readings indicated at the end of each story; the masterful coordination of the Catechism with Bible History; the colored maps, together with an index to the Bible Atlas; carefully selected illustrations, which add to the understanding of the text; a comprehensive pronouncing glossary; an exhaustive index; tables of Biblical weights, money, and time.

Those in charge of Sunday-schools can do no better than to recommend these two volumes to all teachers. This wealth of material will earn for the author the thanks of *all* busy instructors of religion, as without search and loss of time there is placed at their elbow nearly everything necessary for the thorough preparation of the Bible History lesson. The books cover the seventy stories of the Old Testament and the seventy stories of the New Testament embodied in the *Comprehensive Bible History for Lutheran Schools*; but they can well be used by the instructor in connection with any Bible History text-book.

Vol. I of *Bible History References* contains IV and 356 and 18 pages; Vol. II contains VI and 477 and 20 pages. Both books are uniform in size, $5\frac{1}{2} \times 7\frac{5}{8}$. The binding is very substantial, buckram cloth. Price of Vol. I, \$1.75; of Vol. II, \$2.50. The usual discounts apply.

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